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Printing at CERN

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For many years at CERN we had a very sophisticated print server infrastructure which supported several different protocols (AppleTalk, IPX and TCP/IP) and many different printing standards. Today's situation differs a lot: we have much more homogenous network infrastructure, where TCP/IP is used everywhere and we have less printer models, which almost all work with current standards (i.e. they all provide PostScript drivers). This change gave us a possibility to review the current printing architecture aiming in simplification of the infrastructure we have and in full automation of the service.

The new infrastructure offer both LPD service exposing print queues to Linux and Mac OS X computers and native printing for Windows based clients. The printer driver distribution is automatic and native on Windows and is automated by custom mechanisms on UNIX, where the appropriate Foomatic drivers are configured. Also the process of a printer registration and queue creation is completely automated following the printer registration in the network database.

At the end of 2006 we have migrated all (1100+) CERN printers and all user's connections at CERN to the new service. The talk will describe a new architecture and summarize process of migration.

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